

Waterfront Advisory Team Meeting

September 8, 2004

Meeting Attendees

WAT members:

Elizabeth Conner, Melinda Miller, Paul Niebanck, Paul Schell, Greg Smith, Barbara Swift, Heather Trim, Philip Wohlstetter

Guests:

Duncan Davidson, Tim King, Kate Joncas, Richard Labotz, Denny Onslow

Staff:

Dennis Meier, John Rahaim, Guillermo Romano, Robert Scully , Diane Sugimura

Summary Notes

Overall Questions

To begin the meeting, several general questions were raised by WAT members:

- How will differing opinions within the group be reconciled?

Staff will consider all points of view presented by Waterfront Advisory Team and decide how they may or may not be incorporated into the concept plan.

- How will the overall Central Waterfront Plan be implemented? What kind of entity will be the steward?

Implementation and economic conditions will be the focus of the October 27 WAT meeting. The Implementation and Economic Conditions interdepartmental team is preparing items for the WAT to review and discuss at that meeting. The Concept Plan will identify development objectives for the waterfront, including appropriate actions for implementation.

- How is waterfront inland boundary defined: sharp or fuzzy line?

The boundary line indicated for the Central Waterfront Plan is not proposed to be adopted as a neighborhood or sub-area boundary. The study area is only for the purpose of this planning effort and may actually be considered as an overlay applied to the designated urban center and urban villages. The study area was intended to include upland areas where a stronger integration with the shoreline may be desirable, especially with the removal of the viaduct. For this reason, the boundary to the east includes the Center City uplands up to First and Second Avenue in some cases and as far as Fourth Avenue in Pioneer Square.

- What are the critical components of the Concept Plan? This would help the group think about the issues.

The concept plan will be based on the objectives and concept alternatives that have been developed by the Central Waterfront interdepartmental teams after review of the themes and recommendations of the February, 2004 Waterfront Charrette. The draft concept plan will focus on a preferred alternative. The Concept Plan will be comprehensive in scope, addressing such issues as transportation, land use, urban design, and shoreline ecology, as well as include recommendations for implementation.

- How does the overall Central Waterfront Plan fit with planning for the greater city, e.g. SLU or Center City?

The relationship between the Center City Strategy and the Central Waterfront Plan will be discussed at the September 22 WAT meeting.

Team Recommendations

Discussion was focused on conflict areas and potential resolutions. In summary, the Advisory Team recommended that the Waterfront Concept Plan should address the following:

- The appropriate southern boundary for the mixed-use urban waterfront should be the South edge of T46.
- State what the City would like to see happen if it is agreed that T46 should redevelop in the future.
- Redevelopment of the Central Waterfront should be thought of as a framework, and in terms of a phased process over the long term.
- In the southern section, realign the Alaskan Way roadway to the east so that the capacities of terminals 25 and 30 may be expanded. This could allow for shifting container operations from T46 to T25/30 at some point in the future.
- Develop Colman Dock into a waterfront icon with mixed uses.
- Plan for the graceful coexistence of all transportation modes, but giving the benefit of the doubt to pedestrians. Transportation is major cause of conflict, e.g. demand for through trucking will compromise pedestrian environment.
- Ferry service should remain near downtown core for pedestrian users.
- Modify land use code to allow greater flexibility for non-water-dependent uses on piers North of T46.
- Integrate ecological features into the new seawall.
- Develop a major civic space between the Pike Place Market and the new Aquarium, integrated with a SR99 tunnel lid.

There was also discussion on the historic piers along the waterfront. Agreement on a recommendation was not reached. Questions and issues raised include:

- Should waterfront activity be directed to piers, or to inland areas (once the viaduct is gone), or both?
- Could piers be moved from existing locations in order to open vistas along waterfront?
- Creosote pilings have a limited life and ecological impacts: shadows, degrade near-shore habitat.
- Is there potential for taller development on skinnier piers that are further out from the seawall to increase habitat opportunities?

Waterfront Concept Alternatives

In the final portion of the meeting, Nora Daley from Otak previewed the three waterfront conceptual frameworks that were the subject of the staff interdepartmental team charrette in August:

1. Linear
2. String of Pearls
3. Bow Tie

These will be discussed further at the WAT meeting on September 22.